



*Office of the Grand Chief*

Enniska /February 1, 2022

Wa'tkwanonhwera:ton / Greetings,

It's with great pleasure that I provide you with my monthly report. This is my first report for 2022. I hope all of you are having an excellent start to the New Year.

In late 2021, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne began the development of our MCA Strategic Plan. The strategic plan development is being facilitated by a2z Strategic Consulting. In November 2021, the MCA hosted a two-day in-person strategic planning session. This two-day session brought together our Council and several senior leadership from within the MCA to begin the strategic planning framework. Since November, the a2z consultants have hosted several small group sessions with various employees from within the MCA. As a result, seven priority areas have emerged, and we are currently working on the goals associated with the strategic plan. In the coming months, our Council and a2z will present the plan's framework to the community.

I look forward to the plan's ongoing development and the presentation to the community. Keep an eye out for the dialogue session dates.

The attached reports cover November and December of 2021. Last Thursday, our Council hosted our first General Meeting of 2022 utilizing the Zoom platform. Unfortunately, due to the continued infectiousness of the Omicron variant, we continue to host our community meetings on Zoom. The agenda for last week's meeting included a presentation from Economic Development on the proposed skate park, an update on the electric vehicle initiative, and the Fiber to the Home Project. The Acting Director of the Department of Infrastructure Housing and Environment (DIHE), updated the community on the MCA roads program and current projects. We received an update on the status of our land claims and research and our COVID-19 response. The entire recording of last week's General Meeting can be found at: <https://youtu.be/bfjipMZPlcQ>

In closing, I want to thank all of you for your patience, understanding and love in doing your part to keep our community safe and keeping us moving forward. Akwesasne is filled with committed people, and it's a pleasure to serve this community. I hope you have a great month ahead and Happy Valentine's Day.

Sken:nen,

Abram Benedict  
Grand Chief



## **Grand Chief Monthly Activity Report**

### **Kentenhkó:wa & Tsiothóhrha / November & December 2021**

#### **NOVEMBER 1, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- A briefing was provided on the ongoing work on the MCA-CBSA Border Collaboration Initiative.
- Council discussed possible format changes to the monthly General Meeting to ensure the agenda items are covered. This will be further discussed.
- An overview and offer from Clarkson University to further explore collaboration was discussed and will be followed up on.
- Council discussed the overlap between the Chiefs Committee and the Special Needs Committee. The Chiefs committee will follow up on clarifying.
- MCR's passed: Approval to continue with reduced capacity limits at MCA public facilities; Approval of (4) housing upgrade loan(s); Approval of funding agreement with ONWA for human trafficking program; Approval of funding agreement with IFN for victim services; Approval for AFWP to proceed with the purchase of an outreach vehicle; Approval of lease agreement for office space;

Acceptance of gesture to utilize a2z Strategic Consulting services for MCA Strategic Plan.

### **NOVEMBER 2, 2021, BORDER UPDATE**

Every month MCA's Public Safety Portfolio Chiefs, representatives from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, and I participated on the monthly call with the Port Directors for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). The calls now occur on the first Tuesday of the month on the Zoom platform. These calls are designed for Akwesasne to receive regular updates from the Port Directors on current traffic volumes, any issues with local travellers, and reports of any customs officers that may be in quarantine for any reason. These meetings also allow our local governments to provide relevant updates to the CBSA and USCBP representatives.

### **NOVEMBER 2, 2021, INTERNAL HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE**

On the morning of November 2, 2021, I met with our Internal Homelessness committee to share updates on the homeless file. At the meeting of November 2, the committee discussed the recent site visits of a former Cornwall daycare, and the buildings owned by Transport Canada. The committee determined that these facilities/properties do not fit the current needs of Akwesasne. An update was provided on the assessment work needed for the Parisien Manor. Progress on the assessment will continue to be reported back to the committee. The committee discussed the ongoing challenge with permit issues for the Akwesasne Healing Center and the Cornwall Care Center. We recently received an indication that the fire department will require the care center building to be equipped with a sprinkler system. The MCA will continue to seek clarity on this requirement to determine our next steps for the healing center.

## **NOVEMBER 2, 2021, FINANCE COMMITTEE**

On the morning of November 2, 2021, I attended the finance committee. The committee received an update on the 2020/21 MCA audit and preparation for a General Meeting presentation in January 2022. The committee discussed the variance reporting for the MCA and requested that regular reports be reviewed with the committee as part of the Akwesasne Financial Administration Law requirements. The Executive Director discussed the need to prepare for a tender for audit services for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. The committee reviewed two draft job positions being proposed to be part of Mohawk Government, further follow-up on the planning will take place.

## **NOVEMBER 2, 2021, RADIO UPDATE**

On November 2, 2021, I provided the community with an update on CKON 97.3. Since April 6, 2020, I have been providing regular updates on the radio to the community. The topics I discussed included the current COVID-19 status in Akwesasne and the surrounding areas, current restrictions, updates from the Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE) and highlights from the monthly General Meeting. Following my update and presentation, I took questions from the community regarding a variety of subjects. The entire update can be found at: <https://youtu.be/aveuJE7wVjQ>

## **NOVEMBER 2, 2021, CHIEF OF ONTARIO, CHIEFS COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

On the afternoon of November 2, 2021, I participated in the first Chiefs of Ontario, Chiefs Committee on Economic Development. This committee received welcoming remarks from the Ontario Regional Chief who talked about the importance of the committee's work. The committee facilitator reviewed the scope of work being assigned to the committee and reviewed the terms of reference for the

committee. The members of the committee expressed their expectations for the committee and reviewed the Chief's resolution providing the mandate. Chief Edward Roundpoint will represent Akwesasne and I will sit on the committee as his alternate.

### **NOVEMBER 3 & 4, 2021, STRATEGIC PLANNING**

On November 3 & 4, 2021, members of our Council and senior leadership with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne met at the Ramada Inn, Cornwall to begin the process of the MCA Strategic Plan. Our Council engaged a2z Strategic Consultants to assist in the strategic plan development. Over two days, the facilitators broke the group into several group sessions to discuss priorities for the group and community needs. The facilitators worked with small groups and the larger group to begin identifying issues to prioritize. The two-day session was the official beginning of a several-month process to develop the plan. The Council had identified a strategic planning steering committee to work with the consultant to assist in guiding the work. The committee will review preliminary results in the coming weeks.

### **NOVEMBER 5, 2021, CALL WITH MCGILL UNIVERSITY**

On November 5, 2021, I met with representatives from McGill University. The representatives had reached out to me to discuss a recent article in the newspaper regarding an indigenous group claiming that there were indigenous people buried at the McGill campus. The McGill representatives explained that the university was going to be expanding the old Royal Victoria Hospital site and that the expansion site had already been previously disturbed. The representatives committed to keeping me updated as the assessment continued leading towards construction.

## **NOVEMBER 8, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- The Director of Economic Development provided Council with an update and overview of the cannabis application process used for recommendations for issuances of a license.
- A representative from the Independent First Nations (IFN) provided Council with an overview of the IFN and the advocacy and liaison work the IFN does for IFN communities.
- Council received a request for a community impact statement from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. A letter will be drafted and forwarded to the requestor.
- A concern was discussed regarding the safety protocol and processes for AMPS when responding to emergencies, administration will follow up with the Chief of Police.
- Council discussed the minimum participation threshold for law enactment. It was agreed that Council would work with communication to ensure participation in any upcoming processes.
- A briefing was provided on upcoming proposed changes to the MCA Covid-19 Vaccination Policy.
- Grand Chief provided an overview of his involvement in the upcoming negotiations between Canada and First Nations for Child Welfare in Communities.
- A briefing was provided on an upcoming two-day Council session on governance, government, and lobbying.
- MCR's passed: Approval of funding agreement with Quebec for Akwesasne Community Justice Program; Approval of funding agreement with Ontario for Vaccination Support; Approval of funding agreement for Infection Prevention for Tsiionkwanonhso:te; Approval of funding agreement with Ontario for MMIWG supports for



Police Services; Approval of (3) Emergency Council Meeting Minutes; Approval of (2) Council Meeting Minutes; Approval of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) schedule of Revenue and Expenditures for March 2021.

### **NOVEMBER 8, 2021, CALL WITH UNITED WAY**

On the afternoon of November 8, 2021, I participated in a call with the United Way Cornwall and representatives of the City of Cornwall. The purpose of the call was to discuss a proposal from a local community donor interested in assisting with the homelessness in Cornwall. It was explained that the donor would be interested in renting a hotel to support the homeless people within the city. The City of Cornwall representatives explained that there were barriers to using a hotel for long term but committed to finding an alternate solution. Further research will be done on options.

### **NOVEMBER 9, 2021, CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

On November 9, 2021, I participated in my first of many, Canada, First Nations Canadian Human Right Tribunal negotiations sessions. I had been asked by the Ontario Regional Chief to sit on the negotiations team for the Chief of Ontario. The Chiefs of Ontario have been involved in litigation against Canada for discriminating against First Nation children. Recently the Government of Canada offered to enter negotiations to settle the claim. On November 9, 2021, I participated in a planning session with the Ontario team, and a session with Canada on a work plan going forward for the negotiations.

### **NOVEMBER 10, 2021, BI-WEEKLY COVID CALL**

On a bi-weekly basis throughout November Council met with MCA's Administration to specifically discuss and receive updates on our response to COVID-19. These meetings provide an opportunity for Council to thoroughly discuss our current precautions and travel

restrictions. While discussions may occur at length during these bi-weekly Wednesday meetings, decision-making is reserved for the regular Council Meetings.

### **NOVEMBER 12 & 26 2022, BI-WEEKLY MEETING WITH SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE**

Our Council has been meeting with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) on a bi-weekly basis as part of our ongoing commitment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for Council and our Emergency Operations Center to share information on our pandemic response with our counterparts from the SRMT. Topics for these weekly discussions include updates on current positive cases of COVID-19, upcoming state, provincial, and federal directives, updates from the monthly border calls, and other COVID-19 related discussions.

### **NOVEMBER 15, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- Representatives from Transport Canada provided Council with an overview and update on the federal surplus lands file and outlined the next steps with a presentation from the Canada Lands Company.
- The Environmental Service Manager from the MCA Environment Program and representatives from Environment and Climate Change Canada provided Council with an update on the collaborative work on Areas of Concern surrounding Akwesasne.
- Council discussed the possibility of having the district meetings in-person and determined that pending COVID numbers the districts will prepare for January 2022 in-person meetings.
- A concern and briefing were provided on the AMPS process regarding complaints.



- Council received a briefing on the recent tragic loss of an MCA staff member and discussed options of support for the organization and possible additional measures going forward.
- MCR's passed: Approval of an amendment to Department of Health Long Term Care COVID-19 vaccination policy; Approval of a contract with ACCESS for carpentry program funding; Approval of an amendment to MCA Vaccination Policy.

### **NOVEMBER 16, 2021, CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

On November 16, 2021, I participated in the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal negotiations session with Canada and the First Nations. The morning of the session was designated to Canada and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (caring society) for bilateral negotiations. The negotiations are to settle the discrimination against First Nations children. The caring society was the first party to take Canada to the tribunal and is negotiating to ensure that Canada supports long-term reform to the child welfare system in Canada. During the afternoon session, all parties reviewed the proposed language for an agreement in principle.

### **NOVEMBER 19, 2021, UNITED COUNTIES OF STORMONT DUNDAS, AND GLENGARRY**

On the morning of Friday, November 19, 2021, I had the pleasure of providing a few remarks about Akwesasne, our uniqueness and our battle against COVID-19 at Warden Armstrong's Business Breakfast Reception in Winchester. Warden Allan Armstrong was elected the Warden for the United Counties of Stormont Dundas and Glengarry in June 2021. Members of the SDG community shared their business challenges while navigating the pandemic. Keynote speaker Jody Mitic shared his story and experience in overcoming challenges and succeeding. I'm always honoured to share our neighbor's insight

about Akwesasne and explore partnerships opportunities within our region.

## **NOVEMBER 22, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- Representatives from the Department of Infrastructure, Housing & Environment (DIHE) presented to Council a proposed traffic study and outlined the study objectives.
- ICA Associates provided Council with an overview of recent community consultation for the development of an MCA Special Needs Strategic Plan.
- Council discussed the Iroquois Caucus and identified a Chief to represent the MCA at the regular Iroquois Caucus meetings.
- A briefing was provided on recent issues with non-members of Akwesasne trying to cross at the CBSA Cornwall Port of Entry; a follow-up Q&A will be circulated.
- Council set the agenda for the upcoming General Meeting, which is scheduled for December 2, 2021, on the Zoom platform.
- A briefing was provided on an upcoming gathering to support Ashley Thompson.
- Council discussed issues with getting services provided in Tsi Snaihne and Kana:takon; follow-up will happen with the individual businesses.
- A concern with shoreline development and its possible impact on the MCA Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) project was discussed.
- Council received an update on the upcoming memorial.
- A letter of offer to sell a property was presented to Council and will be referred to the property acquisition team for follow-up.

- An update and overview of the two-day Council session were provided.
- MCR's passed: Approval of funding agreement for transitional and housing support; Approval of (3) allotment of land (mortgage paid off); Approval of lease - Ross Island; Approval of contract award for heating fuels for MCA facilities; Approval of application awards for the Akwesasne Healing Fund.

### **NOVEMBER 23 & 24 2021, CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

On November 23 & 24, 2021, I participated in two-day of settlement negotiations for the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal complaint against Canada for the discrimination against First Nation children. This case has many parties involved in the case against Canada. The parties of the case include the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Chiefs of Ontario (COO), Nishnawbe Aski Nation, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (Caring Society). As well there are two class-action lawsuits filed as part of the action against Canada. These actions are for damages, these class actions are known as the Mooshoum and the Trout case. The compensation element of the case is compensation for First Nation children and their families for children placed in foster care. The ongoing negotiations between all parties are for a final settlement for the discrimination, reform and damages.

### **NOVEMBER 29, 30, 2021 COUNCIL TWO-DAY SESSION**

On November 29 & 30, 2021 our Council participated in two days of professional development facilitated by a2z Strategic Consulting. The two-day session was an opportunity for Council to discuss governance functions and team building. The facilitator discussed with Council functions of boards of governors and detailed the importance of decision making as a whole and supporting the

decisions. Throughout two days, Council discussed roles, responsibilities, conflict of interest and how to declare and avoid conflicts. The a2z facilitator presented Council with a draft of the seven emerging priorities from the two-day strategic planning session that occurred at the beginning of November. Also, as part of the two-day session, a lobbyist from Cumberland Strategies, a Government Relations, Public Affairs, and Strategic Communications Firm provided Council with an overview of government lobby processes and decision-making processes within the government. Council was able to discuss current priorities and opportunities to lobby the government for Akwesasne.

### **DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2021, CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS TRIBUNAL**

On December 1 & 2, 2021 I participated in two days of negotiations with Canada for the settlement of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) complaint about discrimination against First Nation Children. Over the last few weeks, the Chiefs of Ontario have been working on an Ontario-specific agreement in principle with Canada. Ontario is in a unique situation because the Federal Government has an agreement with Ontario for First Nation child welfare in Ontario, no other province has an agreement like this. The Chiefs of Ontario became part of the CHRT complaint to ensure Ontario First Nations didn't become part of the national approach to child welfare but rather had an Ontario-specific approach. Over the two days, the Chief of Ontario team met with all parties separately, and in a group, session to work out mutual language on an agreement in principle. A draft agreement in principle was scheduled to be presented to the Chiefs in assembly at the upcoming Assembly of First Nations Special Chiefs Assembly.

## **DECEMBER 3, 2021, VALUE ANALYSIS CANADA**

On the morning of December 3, 2021, I participated in a call with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and representatives of Value Analysis Canada (VAC). This was a follow-up call to the previous call I had with Value Analysis Canada about wanting to help a First Nations. I offered to VAC to set up a call with the Ontario Region of Indigenous Services Canada. On the call of December 3, the representatives of VAC introduced themselves to ISC and explained the methodology used by VAC to tackle difficult infrastructure projects. The VAC representatives explained that their methodology helps maximize resources, foster innovation, and increase stakeholder clarity and alignment. ISC explained that they support infrastructure projects, but the individual First Nations are the project leads. ISC expressed interest in working with VAC but explained that they would have to recommend to a First Nation the VAC approach. The call of December 3, 2021, was an opportunity for ISC and VAC to explore possible future partnerships.

## **DECEMBER 6, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- Council received a briefing on several outstanding issues on the Canada - Akwesasne self-government negotiations and was requested to review the material ahead of an upcoming presentation from Nation Building staff.
- MCR's passed: Approval of micro-credential grant for Iohahi:io; Approval to proceed with the purchase of Holiday gift cards, Approval of Rapid Housing Initiative funding; Approval of one-time funding with Ministry Children and Youth; Approval of agreement with Parks Canada for Deer Heard Reduction; Approval of agreement for Indigenous Marine Liaison Officer; Approval of funding for vaccine support; Approval of upgrade loan to community member; Approval of creation of additional lands

officer position; Approval of (2) amendment to Akwesasne – Canada funding agreement; Approval of Council meeting minutes.

### **DECEMBER 7, 2021, BORDER PARTNERS CALL**

Every month MCA's Public Safety Portfolio Chiefs, representatives from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe and the Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs, and I participated on the monthly call with the Port Directors for the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and the United States Customs and Border Protection (USCBP). The calls now occur on the first Tuesday of the month on the Zoom platform. These calls are designed for Akwesasne to receive regular updates from the Port Directors on current traffic volumes, any issues with local travellers, and reports of any customs officers that may be in quarantine for any reason. These meetings also allow our local governments to provide relevant updates to the CBSA and USCBP representatives.

### **DECEMBER 7, 8, 9, 2021 ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS, SPECIAL CHIEFS' ASSEMBLY & ONTARIO CAUCUS MEETING**

On December 7, 8, 9, 2021, I participated in the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Special Chiefs Assembly (SCA) on the Zoom platform. The National Chief welcomed the Chiefs in Assembly and outlined the work that has been taking place since her election in July. Several reports were provided by the various councils that are part of the assembly of First Nations. Legal Counsel for the AFN gave an overview of the ongoing negotiations with Canada for the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) complaint settlement. Throughout three days, many Ministers from various ministries provided remarks and updates on their department's initiatives and answered questions from the Chiefs. The various Regional Chiefs provided the Chiefs with an update on their respective portfolios. Each portfolio area requested the Chiefs endorse the committee work and provide

mandates by resolution to further their work. The Chiefs in the assembly debated several resolutions over the three-day assembly. The Prime Minister of Canada addressed the Chiefs on the third day and commended the Chiefs for their commitment to keeping their communities safe against COVID-19. The Prime Minister outlined his government's plan for the next several years and took questions. Every morning ahead of the AFN assembly the Chiefs of Ontario met to review the proposed resolution forthcoming at the AFN.

### **DECEMBER 8, 2021, BI-WEEKLY COVID UPDATE**

On a bi-weekly basis, throughout October Council met with MCA's Administration to specifically discuss and receive updates on our response to COVID-19. These meetings provide an opportunity for Council to thoroughly discuss our current precautions and travel restrictions. While discussions may occur at length during these bi-weekly Wednesday meetings, decision-making is reserved for the regular Council Meetings.

### **DECEMBER 9, 2021, FINANCE COMMITTEE**

On the morning of December 9, 2021, I participated in the regular MCA finance committee. The auditor for the MCA provided an update on the MCA 20/21 audit and explained that due to the recent changes at finance the audits have been delayed. An update was only provided on the interim measures being put in place to ensure the finance department and MCA continues to meet their financial obligations. The auditor also explained that he would be working with the acting director to recruit a comptroller and additional financial analysis for the MCA finance program. The finance committee discussed the upcoming holidays and agreed to recommend to council that staff not be required to use their own time for the three days between Christmas and New Year.



## **DECEMBER 10, 2021, BI-WEEKLY CALL WITH SAINT REGIS MOHAWK TRIBE**

Our Council has been meeting with the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT) on a bi-weekly basis as part of our ongoing commitment to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for Council and our Emergency Operations Center to share information on our pandemic response with our counterparts from the SRMT. Topics for these weekly discussions include updates on current positive cases of COVID-19, upcoming state, provincial, and federal directives, updates from the monthly border calls, and other COVID-19 related discussions.

## **DECEMBER 10, 2021 CANADA BORDER SERVICE AGENCY**

On December 10, 2021, members of our Council met with representatives of the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA). Since July 11, 2019, the CBSA and United States Customs have been sharing information on travellers who leave and enter Canada and the United States. The purpose of the exchange of information is to ensure the countries are aware when individuals leave their country, but only in Canada, the information is shared with other government agencies. On the call of December 10, the CBSA representatives explained how the information is collected and what information is shared with other government agencies. We expressed our concern with how the data is being validated and wanted assurances that Akwesasne's unique geographical location was being taken into consideration when collecting and sharing the data. The CBSA committed to examining Akwesasne-specific data and to reporting back how it is treated. We will continue to follow up with CBSA.

## **DECEMBER 13, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- The manager for Entewatatha:wi provided Council with an update and overview of outstanding areas for internal discussion and decision, further updates will be provided.
- MCA Auditor provided Council with a status update of the MCA annual audits, the ongoing efforts to fill current staff vacancies, and the ongoing reporting requirements to various funding partners.
- Council discussed the current heating assistance allocation amount and requested a report be provided on surplus and increase options.
- A request for Council to review the portfolio selections was discussed. A separate meeting will be scheduled to review the portfolios.
- Council discussed the recent notification from Canada that they intend to introduce legislation requiring all federally-regulated workplace employees to be vaccinated. Canada has indicated that considerations will be given for First Nation organizations. Additional follow-up will be completed.
- A briefing was provided on the status of three draft Akwesasne laws that need to have a legal review done as part of the enactment regulations. Council requested MCR's be brought forward to proceed with the review.
- Council discussed the development of the neighbourhood watch program and requested that AMPS and MCA Communications continue to work closely to share information with the community on risks.
- A request for a report regarding the island lease reduction impacts was discussed and will be followed upon.

- MCR's passed: Approval to rescind (2) previous MCR's (error on MCR); Approval of (4) allotment of land (mortgage paid) to community members; Approval of BMO mortgage guarantee for community member; Approval of assignment of leases – St. Francis Island; Approval of assignment of lease – Thompson Island; Approval of funding agreement with Ministry of Children and Youth; Approval of funding for enhanced housing allocation; Approval of rental increase for MCA rental units and rent-to-own units; Approval to rescind previous MCR on property development and direct that a public sale be initiated; Approval of project service contact with Ontario East for Fiber to the Home project; Approval of 5-year strategic plan for special needs; Approval of 2021 MCA holiday closure.

#### **DECEMBER 14, 2021, TRANSPORT CANADA**

On the morning of December 14, 2021, I hosted a call with representatives from Transport Canada (TC). The call was an opportunity to touch base with the Transport Canada representatives on the seaway file. The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has received a settlement offer from Canada on the seaway litigation, but due to the pandemic, we have been unable to conduct our community consultation and ratification of the offer. On the call of December 14, I provided the transport representatives with an update on projected timelines. On the call with also discussed a recent letter I had sent to the Minister of Transport expressing concern with the current governance structure of the Seaway International Bridge Corporation (SIBC) and outlined governance reform for Canada to consider. The representatives of transport committed to following up with the Minister's office to schedule a call with me.

## **DECEMBER 14, 2021, MEETING WITH QUEBEC MINISTER IAN LAFRENIERE**

On Wednesday, December 14, 2021, our Council met with the Aboriginal Affairs Minister for Quebec, Ian Lafrenière, to discuss several files related to the Quebec and Akwesasne relationship. We explained to Minister Lafrenière, the ongoing challenge Akwesasne experiences in attracting health professionals to serve our community due to licensing, language, and jurisdictional barriers. We also expressed our frustration with the lack of Quebec businesses refusing to take any other status cards for tax exemption except those from Kahnawake. The minister committed to continuing the work to find solutions to these barriers and build upon our successes with Quebec.

## **DECEMBER 15, 2021, CORNWALL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL MEDICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

On the evening of December 15, 2021, I attended the Cornwall Community Hospital Medical Advisory Committee. The committee received a presentation on proposed changes to hospital policy and medical directives that govern the daily operations of the hospital. The committee received and approved several committee meeting minutes including the meeting of the last advisory meeting in November. The committee received updates and reports from the Chief of Staff, Chief Executive Officer, President of Medical Staff, Chief Nursing Officer, and the Vice-President of Medical Affairs.

## **DECEMBER 15, 2021 ENTEWATATHA:WI SELF-GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS**

On the morning of December 15, 2021, I attended the Entewatatha:wi Self-Government Negotiations with Canada. I provided opening/welcoming remarks to the Akwesasne and Canada teams. I explained that Akwesasne is committed to moving the negotiations

forward and working through the outstanding issues. After Canada's welcoming remarks, we reviewed the previous meeting minutes. The negotiating teams reviewed in detail the outstanding issues from the last meeting and the overall outstanding issues. I was only able to participate in the morning session of the negotiations which was mostly a review of all the outstanding issues in detail. I provided an update on my recent meeting with the Minister to reiterate Akwesasne's position on the outstanding matters.

### **DECEMBER 16, 2021, AKWESASNE HARBOR DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

On the morning of December 16, 2021, members of our Akwesasne Harbor Development Corporation including our MCA auditor met with representatives of the City of Cornwall. The City of Cornwall on behalf of Akwesasne and the city manages the daily administrative components of the Port Lands. At the meeting of December 16, the parties discussed the current arrangement for the administration and the reporting for the port lands. It was agreed that the project manager ACC Futures will follow up with Transport Canada to discuss how reporting to Transport Canada and Canada can be streamlined within the current agreements between all parties.

### **DECEMBER 16, 2021, PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA**

On December 16, 2021, I hosted a call with representatives from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) to discuss Akwesasne's ongoing need for COVID-19 rapid tests. The representatives explained that the rapid tests were in high demand, but PHAC had some alternate testing kits for Akwesasne to consider. PHAC presented the opportunity for Akwesasne to consider a testing machine in Akwesasne, the machine would require some training and medically trained personnel to be run the testing machine. This offer

will be further researched and considered. On the call, PHAC committed to sending Akwesasne more rapid tests to meet our needs.

### **DECEMBER 16, 2021, QUEBEC HYDRO**

On the afternoon of December 16, 2021, members of our Council met with representatives of Hydro-Quebec (HQ). Over the last several months we have been meeting with Hydro-Quebec regularly to receive updates. At the meeting of December 16, the HQ representatives explained that they have conducted assessments of the main transmission line and other areas of high vegetation. The HQ representations reported that the inspection had determined 31 minor areas and two areas of immediate concern. It was explained that the two immediate areas will be actioned in immediately. The representatives explained that HQ is examining a micro-grid and a possible backup line to support Akwesasne. We will continue to meet with Hydro-Quebec to advocate for long-term solutions for Akwesasne's electricity needs.

### **DECEMBER 17, 2021, MCA STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE**

As part of our strategic planning process, the MCA created a strategic planning committee. On December 17, 2021, I attended a strategic planning committee meeting. At this meeting, the a2z consultant provided the committee with an overview of the seven emerging priorities that came out of the two-day session earlier in November. The committee reviewed and discussed the priorities and provided affirmation on the priorities. The committee also received an update on the MCA department meetings taking place between a2z and departments. The committee will meet after an all-management meeting to review the emerging priorities.

## **DECEMBER 17, 2021, STORMONT, DUNDAS, GLENGARRY SWEARING-IN**

On December 17, 2021, I attended the swearing-in for Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry (SDG) Warden Carma Williams. The swearing-in took place at the SDG municipal office in the City of Cornwall. I was invited to share congratulatory remarks for Warden Carma. I expressed my appreciation for the invite and remarked that it was a privilege to be sharing remarks as the first Grand Chief to attend a swearing-in and to celebrate the swearing-in of the second-ever woman as warden for SDG since the creation of the position.

## **DECEMBER 17, 2021, CALL WITH INDIAN REGISTRAR**

On the afternoon of December 17, 2021, I hosted a call with the Indian Register for Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) regarding the Akwesasne Indian Registry. On the call of December 17, I requested a copy of the “A” list for Akwesasne. The “A” list is a list of individuals who were adopted out of the community and were removed from the Indian Registry. The Indian Registrar explained to me that some of the individuals who were on the “A” list may have been moved on the Akwesasne Indian Registry if they're requested to be registered. I requested from the registrar the number of persons on the “A” list. The request will be followed upon.

## **DECEMBER 20, 2021, COUNCIL MEETING UPDATE**

- Council received a briefing on an upcoming visit request and will review it in the new year on a case-by-case basis.
- A briefing was provided on the upcoming initiative of holiday gift cards being distributed to the community.
- Council discussed meeting cancellation protocol; portfolio will follow up on what the protocol is.



- MCR's passed: approval of Executive Director to signed grant agreement for Iohahi:io; approval of an application to Indigenous Services Canada for replacement of HAVFD station # 3 pumper truck; approval of 2020 audit for the Ministry of Education; approval of (3) Council meeting minutes; approval of emergency Council meeting minutes.